

the easiest and the gentlest of all. Whatever its character, revolution is in certain cases desirable, because beneficial. Among the causes of revolution are the failure of the succession and the conflict of rival candidates for the sovereignty, the excessive poverty of the greater part of the people and the undue wealth of a few of the citizens, the unequal distribution of offices and honours, the ambition of governments, the retribution of injuries, the oppression of tyrants, the change of laws and religion, the reaction against a voluptuous prince. Monarchies, in his opinion, which he might have changed had he lived three centuries later, are less subject to revolution than democracies or aristocracies. This distinction it owes to the hereditary principle. The greatest danger to monarchic stability lies in the exactions and cruelties of the prince, while the chief menace to popular and aristocratic States is the placing of the military force under the control of one man. He is master of the State who is master of its forces. The popular State is the most exposed to revolution, and the main cause, in Bodin's eyes, is the spirit of change and the habit of discussion inherent in the people. Discussion is an enemy of stability. It did not occur to him to ask whether it might not be the surest guarantee of order. To let men speak and discuss as they list is still foreign to the genius of the sixteenth century, the Renaissance and the Reformation notwithstanding. Democracy still seems identical with sedition. "The true bent of the people is to enjoy full liberty without bridle or restraint whatsoever, and established equality in goods, honours, &c., without any consideration for nobility, knowledge, or virtue." In an aristocratic State the chance of revolution is less, but such States are especially exposed to the factions of the nobles and the discontent of the people. It is the tendency of a monarchy to change into an aristocracy, and of both popular and aristocratic States to assume a monarchic form. No State, whatever its form, is safe from revolution ; no State but in the course of time suffers change, and arrives at length at ruin. Revolutions are, however, preventable. The main thing is to apply the right remedy at the right time, avoiding extreme measures, unless the malady is extreme. Reform is thus vindicated as the grand safeguard of States, but it is reform of a very gradual kind, and takes no